

Fording Upstream in Search for *Balitok* Ibaloi Diaspora Into Benguet (Part 1)

Michael Armand Canilao¹

Abstract

Gold has been an organising principle to numerous highland peoplings and exchanges in Southeast Asia (Dobbin 1983; Harrison and O' Connor 1970; Keesing 1962; Miksic 1980), and the gold-rich ridges of Benguet Mountains, Philippines were not an exception to this. Gold may have catalysed some early Ibaloi migrations from the 14th (or earlier) to 15th centuries. The lure of gold subsequently motivated colonial conquests beginning in the 16th century to control this rugged landscape (Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985; Caballero 1996). The earliest custodians of this rich resource were the Ibaloi, who developed the mastery of the extraction of gold and its barter to the lowland Pangasinan and Ilocos people who, in turn, used or traded this material to the Southeast Asian sea traders (Azurin 1991).

Introduction

The Benguet Archaeological Survey done conducted by the author during the Summer of 2008 was an initial attempt that sought to understand the early peopling or settlement of Benguet, Philippines. This was done through a triangulated or holistic approach that utilized archaeology in tandem with sources coming from anthropology (ethnography), oral traditions, and ethno-history.

¹ Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines;
Archaeological Studies Program, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Email: mcanilao@ateneo.edu

The triangulated approach of the study looked into Benguet peopling accounts by using published Ibaloi oral traditions as a point of entry, then conducting systematic archaeological surface surveys on the oral tradition-identified Ibaloi early settlement locations of *Chuyo*, *Palaypay*, and *Imbose* in Benguet to determine if these are, indeed, archaeological sites. These accounts were then re-examined against written archaeological, anthropological-ethnographic, historical, and more importantly, conventional ethno-historical sources on Benguet and also, broader Southeast Asia peopling from the pre-contact to the contact periods.

This paper is the first installment (of three) that will focus on the ethno-historical aspect of the holistic/triangulated approach. In this paper, we get a glimpse of the early lifeways of the Ibaloi as depicted through the various Spanish and American accounts on the character and conditions of the Benguet landscape in Contact times. This is important because we get socio-demographic data on the early settlements of the Ibaloi, which are integral in understanding the first settlements. Here, pre - Contact Southeast Asian gold-extracting societies are also examined as parallels to those found in Benguet.

Preliminary Notes on the Peopling of Benguet

There are some important inferences made by scholars writing on the peopling of Benguet. Two different accounts by Beyer (1947) and Eggan (1941) are the most cited among the secondary sources delving into Benguet peopling . According to Beyer (1947), the first Negrito migration into Northern Luzon was subsequently followed by five migrations, accounting for racial and cultural characteristics of the inhabitants to include mountain dwellers. Beyer wrote in his 1918 Philippine Census report about the settlers of Benguet: “The culture of Southern Benguet may have been an offshoot directly from the Agno Valley, while that of Northern Benguet may have come over from Lepanto or from Western Ifugao.” (in Keesing 1962:318). Eggan’s (1941:11) account, on the other hand, points to “dynamic changes and localised developments” radiating to and from the central zone of the Cordillera with certain cultural variations increasing or decreasing from the centre.

Keesing (1962:13-14) has written that the peopling of the mountain areas of Northern Luzon may have been motivated by a host of the following factors: the abundance of animal hunts ranging from deers to

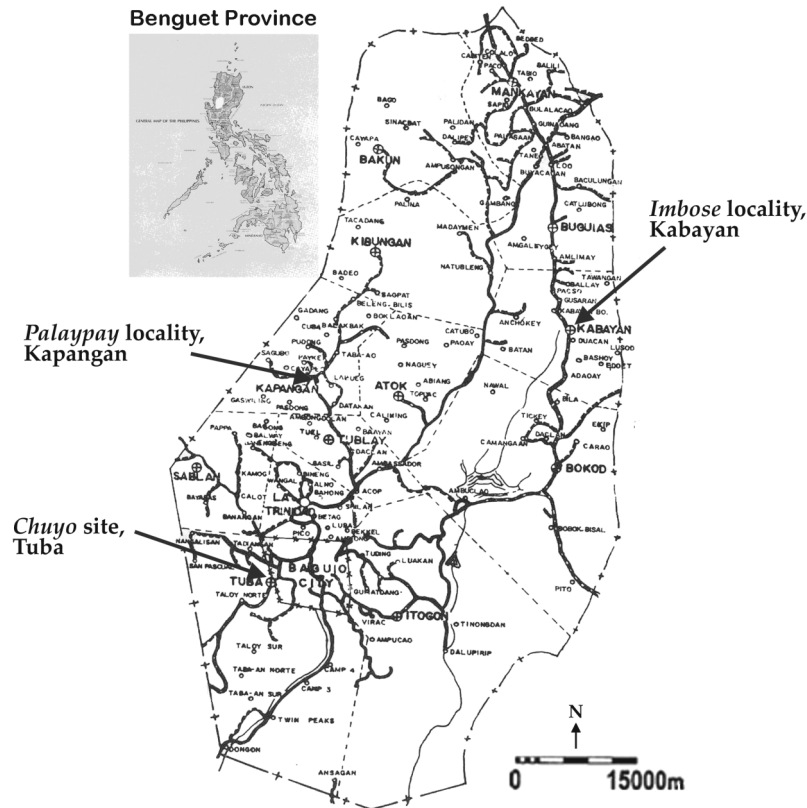


Figure 1. Map of Benguet showing localities surveyed last April 2008 (modified after Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985)

wild carabaos and wild pigs in these mountains and/or the search for honey, bees wax, and lumber. Later, during the Spanish-contact times, the retreat of lowlanders to the mountains to escape Spanish rule could have been another factor (Mateo 2004). However, just as gold was an organising principle to numerous highland peoplings and exchanges in Southeast Asia (Miksic 1990; Dobbins 1983; Harrison and O'Connor 1970), the gold mines of Benguet may also have driven the Ibaloi diaspora into this rugged mountainscape from the 14th to 15th centuries, or even earlier. This insight is inferred from the literature (Caballero 1996; Fry 1983; Keesing 1962; Perez 1904; Quirante 1624; Scheerer 1905).

General Ethno-history of Benguet

De Raedt (1987) and Keesing (1962) believe that some ethno-linguistic groups found in the Cordilleras could be extensions of lowland populations, such as the Pangasinense of which the Ibaloi are the extensions of. Keesing (1962) produced a comprehensive ethno-history of

Northern Luzon which he based on historical and archival documents complemented with cultural, linguistic, and geographic data at initial Spanish contact to determine the similarities and differences of the two groups.

Keesing believes that the Ibaloi are offshoots of the lowland Pangasinense. Due to the Spanish reduction or Christianisation of the lowland Pangasinense, the once homogenous Pangasinense and Ibaloi have become differentiated, with the latter retaining more of the original culture. This does not discount a reverse highland to lowland movement. This process was, for instance, reflected in the neighbouring foothills of the Ilocos area where "ilocanised" Kankanaeys and Ibalois have become Bagos—from "bago nga Kristiano" (new Christian) (Keesing 1962).

An important aspect of Keesing's (1962:6-7) research is his analysis of river and ridge systems which could have best served as pathways to migration. He even looked at pre-Hispanic trading routes which, he proposed, are probably the same pathways of migration.

Gold lies in the foundation of earliest remembered times in Ibaloi society. In fact, gold extraction may have been the main attraction for the early peopling of the Benguet Mountains in statements such as "It will be seen as a fair hypothesis that one of the major factors, if not the major factor, leading to the original settlements of these highest sections of the mountain chain by Filipino groups was this working of metals" (Keesing 1962:14) or "This speculative exercise begins to take historic shape in the early records of trade in gold, hides, wax, and other mountain products. . . .it seems a plausible hypothesis that the first upland residence came about in gold-working areas" (Keesing 1962:304).

During the period of contact with the Spaniards, retreat to the easily defensible rugged terrains in the interior also accounted for migrations into the mountains. The Ibaloi had a highly mobile and scattered residential pattern that was situated near the mines or in defensible positions. Such a strategic orientation in the general settlement patterns of the Ibaloi was still prevalent up to the 20th century (Keesing 1962:64). Quirante (1624:262-301) in his expedition noticed that the settlements of the Benguet Ibaloi were "established on peaks of the mountains and on the roughest of them." This settlement pattern is also a result of the inter-village and inter-tribal conflicts that were chronic in the Cordillera milieu even before Spanish-contact times (Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985:65-120). Ethno-historians commonly assert that this

scattered settlement strategy was also observed in the neighbouring group, Ifugao, upon Spanish contact.

People influx into this rugged terrain became more prevalent during the period of Spanish contact. One of the motivations for this people movement was the lure of gold which was abundant in the area (Keesing 1962).

The mines of Benguet and its surrounding vicinities are undoubtedly gold rich. The Ibaloi ethno-linguistic group developed the mastery in the extraction and processing of this precious metal. In fact, because of this yellow metal, the Ibaloi did not have to develop extensive irrigated rice agriculture comparable to those of the neighbouring Cordillera ethno-linguistic groups (Scott 1994:258; Cariño 1985:45). There are even early accounts that rice was used only for *tapuy* or rice wine (Herosa 1780). This rice was planted by using pluvial, dry- cultivation techniques (Keesing 1962:80). It was only in later centuries that rice has become status laden--ownership of rice fields was the measure of prestige and wealth.

In contemporary times, one notices how prevalent pluvial and phreatic anthraquic wet rice cultivation has become among Ibaloi communities notably at the municipality of Kabayan where they have a local variety of rice--the *kintoman*. Keesing (1962) noted that the Ibaloi only shifted their subsistence pattern from dry cultivation to wet cultivation in the 19th century.

The picture afforded from the work of Quirante (1624) is of a scattered settlement pattern with great potential mobility, of cogon grass houses, and also of the practice of dry cultivation. Any reference to rice cropping, or to terraced and irrigated fields, is strikingly absent. Yet this was late February--a time when the modern Ibaloi have transplanted their rice from the seedbeds to the flooded terraces, with the harvest ripening in June (Moss 1920:221--222). It will be seen that another "exploring" expedition led by Galvey (1842) two centuries later (January 1829) also failed to report wet rice terracing. The presumption is that it was adopted by the Ibaloi during the 19th century and, indeed, in the 20th century; as will be seen, government reports tell of the first terraces being built in remoter northern zones of Benguet (Keesing 1962:65)

It is argued that the first terraces of Northern Benguet were constructed only in the 20th century (Keesing 1962). Dry cultivation of root crops, which supplemented the main occupation of gold panning in the rainy season, and gold mining in the dry season were the primary modes of subsistence prior to the 19th century. The earliest account of this lifeway was by Quirante in 1624. Don Guillermo Galvey (1842) has an account of an expedition into Tonglo in 1829 and observed that the early settlements were also sparse, surrounded by fields of root crops (sweet potato, taro, and sugarcane) and notably, rice was absent. It was in a later expedition to Kabayan in 1833 that the first account of the early beginnings of wet rice cultivation was made by Galvey (1842).

Keesing believes that wet rice cultivation was already planting its roots at Eastern Benguet during this period. It is highly probable that wet rice terracing was an influence from Ifugao, whereas the other Western Benguet areas were still largely root-cropping/dry-cultivation areas. It should be kept in mind, however, that this change may simply reflect a shift in emphasis and not necessarily a chronological succession.

The entry of wet rice agriculture into the Benguet landscape in the 19th century is interesting for this study because it is the social situation that permeated into the early (13th–14th CE) settlement oral tradition accounts of the Ibaloi. Ethno-historical data, however, show that the locations of early settlements in Benguet are undoubtedly tied to small-scale gold extraction.

The Lure of Balitok (Gold) Beginning in the 13th–14th CE or Earlier

A survey of ethno-historical accounts of peopling of the Cordillera indicates that while gold and gold extraction have been written to have long existed in this region, the role of gold in the peopling of Benguet has been downplayed by oral traditions. Thus, E. J. Caballero (1996), in her book on Kankanaey traditional miners of sitios Batuang and Dalicno of Itogon, Benguet, noted the same puzzling phenomenon in early accounts. She wrote that archaeological evidences point to the appearance of gold in the Philippines as early as 400–250 BC (Caballero 1996:6). Caballero (1996:115) concluded from her survey that the history of mining in the Philippines can be periodised into four: (1) Pre-Chinese, (2) Chinese (400 BC–1500s), (3) Spanish (from early 1500s to 1898), and (4) American period (1898–1941). This periodisation can still be improved in the future when we have done more basic research; internal-to-Ibaloi culture

markers can then be used to label the periods of gold exploitation in Benguet.

For now, let us look at some of the ethno-historical descriptions of the gold found in Benguet. What follows is an excerpt from one of the earliest historical documents that depict the “character and conditions” of the Filipinos upon the arrival of the Spanish forces in Northern Luzon:

“...gold was found in all of these islands; it is obtained from rivers, and in some places, from the mines, which the natives work. However, they do not work the mines steadily, but only when forced by necessity... they do not even try to become wealthy... the land possesses much gold; for much men, whether they be chiefs or not, whether freeman or slave, extract and sell gold...” (de Legaspi 1569:56).

Gold is one of the main articles that caught the attention of the Spanish and American colonisers because of its abundance in the Benguet mountains. During the Spanish period, the initial impetus for expansion into the region has been the presence of gold, which they hoped would replenish dwindling gold reserves in the national coffers of Spain (Keesing 1962:13; Scott 1974:4).

The output of the Benguet mines has been enormous throughout the centuries. For instance, the first tribute of the lowland provinces of Ilocos and Pangasinan given to the Spaniards in the 16th century amounted to 109,500.00 Philippine pesos (not adjusted to inflation). Moreover, a single encomiendero in 1587 sent three thousand taheles of gold in the Santa Ana Galleon which was eventually captured by the “enemy ship Cavendish” (de Morga 1609:101–102). The mid-16th century exploration of Juan de Salcedo and Martin de Goiti in Northern Luzon from west to east coast brought back four thousand taheles of gold (de Ortega 1573). In 1573, Captain Lorenzo Chacon was sent by Governor Leazaris on a similar conquest of Northern Luzon and collected three thousand taheles of gold (de Ortega 1573).

Gold output went into full throttle during the American period. Governor Colin (late 19th century) reported that gold valued at 100,000.00 Philippine pesos was taken annually from the mines. The Benguet “gold boom” was experienced from 1900 to 1931. The “gold rush” was from 1931 to 1937 (see also Fry 1983: 170–188). During the boom period, 40 gold-mining companies registered their outfits with the Securities and Exchange Commission. From the early days of the gold rush, mechanical mining in the Antamok mining district alone has produced 800 tons of

gold since 1903 (Mills 1980). The magnitude and importance of the gold-mining industry can be gleaned from its combined production value of 77,332,373.00 Philippine pesos, which accounts for almost 90 percent of national production in 1967 (Mills 1980).

From the early beginnings of gold mining up to the Spanish period, gold was brought down to the lowlands to be exchanged for desirables. Dela Vega (1609:303–305) made a description of this livelihood of the Ygolottes,

“For there, many centuries, the greatest quantity of gold... of the finest quality... has been and still obtained by them and at present time the industry is as active as ever... most of it 22 carats, for almost daily these Ygolottes go to a village of the province of Pangasinan, as to an emporium, to buy provisions in exchange”.

It was of primary urgency for the Spaniards to control the Ibaloi gold mines. Gold was being traded extensively to the lowland Ilocos and Pangasinan people and eventually to the seaborne traders without the colonisers exercising control over the transactions. This catalysed into numerous military attempts to enter the Benguet area to control the mines.

The first few incursions from the late 16th to the early 17th centuries are of special relevance to this research, since these give us a picture of the early Ibaloi at the arrival of the Spaniards.

The easy entry of the initial Spanish incursion into Benguet territory in 1576 by Governor Sande's forces encountered little resistance because of the powerful first impression of the rifle, the relative lack of opposition on the part of the mountaineers, and the sparse population in Benguet. Governor Sande sent the sergeant major of his camp together with 40 arquebusiers (riflemen) who successfully reached the mines and took back some gold with them (de Sande 1576:21–97). The second expedition into the mines was led by Juan Pacheco Maldonado, following orders from Governor Ronquillo in 1583, but was a resounding failure owing to mismanagement (de la Vega 1609:301–318). The third incursion was attempted from the northeast passing through Tuy (present-day Nueva Viscaya and Isabela) under the leadership of Captain Clavijo who had to turn back after encountering a force of 1000 Igorots (de la Vega 1609:301–318). The fourth attempt was in 1623 and was set off by

mounting pressures from King Felipe II to capture the “Igolotte mines”. Francisco Carreno de Valdes headed this expedition but after marching for eight days, his party was attacked by the Igorots who initially welcomed them (de Zuniga 1803:113–128).

The year 1624 marked the most successful Spanish full-scale penetration into the Benguet area commanded by Captain Alonzo Martin Quirante. He built his base at the mining settlement of Galan (present-day Tublay area near the headwaters of Naguillian) and called this Fort Santiago. Galan has 200 Ibaloi houses at the time and is surrounded by “five elevations”. He set out to explore the four other gold-mining sites of Arisey and Bugayona, Baranaban, Antamog, and Conog (Quirante 1642:262–305). This resulted in the writing of the first detailed description of the Benguet mines, the Ibaloi and their mining culture.

Spanish military control of the Cordilleras was always ephemeral because of the long and treacherous supply lines/trails. The love of freedom by the Cordillera groups also led to effective defense of the mountain ranges. It was only in the 19th century that inland mission centres had a more or less established presence in the mountains (Keesing 1962:27).

Paths of Trade in the Gold “Emporium”

Trading was one of the main pre-occupations of the Ibaloi commencing as early as the 13th century. The highland Ibaloi traded gold with the lowland Pangasinan and Ilocos people in exchange for bagoong (fish paste), wax, honey, rice, salt, pigs, cows, carabaos, blankets, mats, abels (Ilocano cloth), ceramics, and semi-precious beads (see de Morga 1609; dela Vega 1609; de Medina 1630; Gemelli-Carreri 1697:433–434; Keesing 1962:28; Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985:76–78; Azurin 1991:35; Scott 1992:5–25; Prill-Brett and Ramos 1998). Ceramics were important to the early Filipinos because they attached immense value on ceramics for ritualistic purposes (e.g., in Pila, Laguna, see Tenazas 1968). The Ibaloi were fascinated with the Chinese porcelain jars with dragon designs and used them as containers of tapuy (rice wine). These tradewares were also used as heirlooms and pabaons (offerings) (Junker 1999:241). Interestingly, gold miners in Santubong River, Sumatra also fancied this stoneware and traded them for gold (Harrisson and O’Connor 1970).

Nestled in the bosoms of the Benguet mountains, the gold trade also centred at Tonglo, which is considered as one of the earliest settlements of the Ibaloi. Tonglo may have been a “bulking station” similar to those in Sumatra catering to the Minangkabau highlands (Dobbin 1983). Gold coming from the Antamok and Acupan mines was brought here to be refined before their trip down to the lowlands.

The ancient villages of Agoon, Lingayen, Aringay, San Fernando, and current day Santo Tomas, La Union were the eventual destinations of the Benguet gold (Buzeta 1850–51, quoted by Keesing 1962:86–88; Carino 1985:258). In a letter to the Spanish king dated in 1574, de Mirandaola (1574:223–224) mentioned “the neighbourhoods of Balatao, Turrey, Alingay, and Dinglas” as the other sources of gold. Here, the gold was refined for the overseas market at 20–22 carats (Carino 1985:258).

Aside from reaching immediately adjoining lowland areas of Pangasinan and Ilocos, Benguet gold also reached the westernmost tip of Luzon, which is Bolinao. Excavations conducted by Avelino Legaspi (1974) in the 1960s at Balingasay, Bolinao revealed that gold eye masks, tooth peggings, and others were associated with burials dating to the 14th–15th centuries. These may have come from the Benguet mines, brought over by the Ibaloi in exchange for ceramics, assorted livestock, and fresh catches of fishes from the South China Sea. This gold not only ended up in the lowland households but also managed to reach foreign shores through seaborne intermediaries—the Southeast Asian traders (Azurin 1993).

According to the Ibaloi, they used to be lowland dwellers, who followed the river tributaries upstream, until they arrived in Benguet and established their communities (Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985:21). Several authors have already argued that major riverine and stream systems in the Philippines were not only principal sources of water for everyday needs but also were ancient thoroughfares that were accessible through canoes, or through hikes on trails that paralleled the river systems (Solheim 1981; Fox 1958; Keesing 1962).

The Northwestern Luzon rivers were integral to the early lifeways of the people. Aside from watering the plains, rivers such as the Agno, Bauang- Naguilian, and Angalacan also provided gold dust and served as important passages for people, goods, and ideas upstream (Keesing 1962:62; Cortes 1974:11). The upland-lowland confluence was observed not only in Northwestern Luzon but also further north.

Azurin (1991) highlighted the confluence of Northern Ilocos lowlanders and upland Cordillerans through the river systems. He focused on the confluence of the lowland Ilocanos and the highland Bontocs and Tingguians. In fact, Ilocano and Bontok elders vividly recall how they set out to sail on the rivers by using bamboo rafts shoved forward by a bamboo pole.

“Developed” Gold Trade and the Northwestern Luzon Riverine Exchange Network

The following discussion shows that the coastal Pangasinan and Ilocano traders served as intermediaries to Southeast Asian seafarers who visited Luzon for resources, notably gold. This is important because this accounts for the high demand that was felt by the Ibaloi for their gold. This was one of the main engines that kept gold mining and upland-lowland trading in operation.

Seaborne traders were known to have stopped regularly at ports along the Northwestern Luzon shores (Azurin 1991:35). These anchorages were situated on river deltas forming the backbone of what could be called the Northwestern Luzon riverine exchange network. Such locations facilitated the quicker transport of goods from the uplands down to the lowlands and eventually to the sea traders. The delta locations were strategic entrepots to the valleys and upland markets of Luzon where trade items coming from overseas were exchanged with gold. Some foreign traders came all the way from Southern China, Japan, Xava (Java), Borneo (Borneo), Annam (Vietnam), Siam (Thailand), Champa (Vietnam), Moluccas, New Guinea, Macau, India, and Amoy (de Legaspi 1569; de Loarca 1582; de Medina 1630; Keesing 1962; Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985; Azurin 1991; Caballero 1996).

The different Asian traders came to the island to buy gold of the Malubay, Bizlin, and Linguinguin types (de Mirandaola 1570:224). The Southern Indians, for instance, have been noted to have regularly visited the Southeast Asia region in the first century in search of gold (Miksic 1990:30). The Spaniards noted these foreign trading relations when they arrived in the archipelago during the 15th century. They also observed the delta entrepots in Northern Luzon. De Legaspi (1569) described some of the early settlements of Filipinos to be thickly populated and located along the coast and the rivers.

In Juan de Salcedo's exploration of Luzon during the 16th century, he observed that most of the villages in coastal Pangasinan were located in the mouths of rivers such as Lingayen, Port of Jojon (Agoon), Bauang, Puraon, and Balaoang. When he sailed further inland through the Agno River, he reached a poblacion called Pueblo Malimpit near Lingayen. In Angalacan River, he also sailed upriver and encountered another pueblo. In Agoon River, he also sailed inland and encountered a hamlet-sized settlement (de los Reyes 1890 in Perez 1904:II 10–12). This indicates that small settlements were also seen along the meandering river valleys of the Northwestern Luzon rivers. Ilocos area was no different from Pangasinan, because entrepots were already bustling villages flourishing with trade when the Spaniards arrived in the 16th century (de Legaspi 1569).

On an interesting note, it has been argued that the majority of the language groups observed by the Spanish colonisers upon landing in Philippine shores were named in relation to the riverine locations of their settlements. The Tagalogs taken from *taga ilog* (river settlers), the Ilocanos from *Iloko* (small waterway), the Pangasinans from *Pangan* (riverbank), and the Kapampangans from *pampang* (river mouth) (de los Reyes 1890). This shows how valuable rivers were in the world view of the early Filipinos.

Non-Hispanic Accounts of the Gold Trade through the Lens of Written Sources

Pre-hispanic source materials are also available to shed light on the trading relations between the Philippines and the rest of Southeast Asia. The annals of the Chinese Sung (960–1278) and Yuan (1260–1368) dynasties give accounts of trading relations with the Philippines (Scott 1984). It shows that the earliest tribute mission coming from Luzon was sent to China in 1373. There are also definitive mentions of Pangasinan and Lingayen in the Chinese early records. Lingayen was called Li-yin-tung and appeared as a port of call in the book of sailing directions made by Chang Hsieh called *Tung Hsi Yang K'ao* (Eastern and Western Sea Pilot 1618 in Scott 1984). Tribute missions coming from Pangasinan were also noted in the Ming dynasty records.

Pangasinan (Feng-chia-hsi-lan) appeared in the Ming dynasty records five times during the next five years, for example, Chieftain Kamayin on September 23, 1406, and Chieftains Taymey (tortoise shell) and Liyu in 1408 and 1409. On December 11, 1411, the Emperor tendered

the Pangasinan party a state banquet. (Ming Shih-Ming history and Ming Shih Lu veritable records of the Ming Dynasty quoted by Scott 1984:75).

According to Reid (1999), Philippine locations, especially Luzon, started to appear in Chinese annals, resultant of the contact between Luzon and Southern China. China sent several tribute missions to the eastern coast of the Philippines from 1372 to 1427. Champa also had a well-established trading relation with the Philippine islands and Reid (1999) delineated the periods when the trading relations were at its full blossom.

There “were... close commercial connections between Philippine ports and those of the Cham coast in the 11th to 12th centuries, and again between about 1450 and 1567 when the direct China-Philippine eastern route was permanently established” (Reid 1999:48). Funan is another polity which had established trading relations with the Philippine islands. Miksic (2008) believes that Funan may have imported gold from the Philippines. Long before European contact, Filipino merchantmen and mariners were already spread all over Southeast Asia. There were even Filipinos in Melaka during 1511 when the Portuguese ships arrived (Reid 1999:48–49).

Caballero (1996:5–43), relying on Scott’s (1984) *Pre-Hispanic Source Materials for the Study of Philippine Pre-history*, also discussed historical events in the Cordillera related to gold mining and trading as part of Chapter II of her work entitled “The History of Gold in the Philippines”.

Gold in Southeast Asia

At this juncture, a look into comparative regional Southeast Asian gold sources and manufacturing centres can help us understand how this yellow metal may have integrated peninsular and insular Southeast Asia through the maritime trade routes. Parallelisms in other Southeast Asian locations suggests a center-periphery relationship in the region with the gold manufacturing centers (i.e., Oc eo, Java) occupying the center and the gold sources (Benguet, Tanah Datar, Santubong) occupying the peripheries.

Gold has been a main contributor to the migration of people into otherwise uninhabitable terrains in and around Southeast Asia. We have seen this phenomenon in some major highland gold-mining sites in Southeast Asia, such as in Santubong, Sarawak; Tanah Datar, Sumatra;

and the Northwestern Luzon rivers. Gold was purchased in its unprocessed form from Lingayen gulf and Santubong before it was brought to manufacturing centres overseas such as Oc-eo and Java. In fact, it is suggested that the Philippine based cultures and their counterpart Sarawak miners only mined gold for this trade with the foreigners and they did not really develop an enterprising spirit in getting this precious metal to enrich themselves (de Legazpi 1569:56; Harrison and O' Connor 1970:28).

Harrison (Harrison and O'Connor 1970) was involved in archaeological investigations of the Santubong gold-mining site at the delta of the Sarawak River in West Borneo. Deposits of iron, antimony, and gold were found in abundance in the hinterlands of the Sarawak river system. The Sarawak river was the site of extensive collection, smelting, and trading of iron and gold, which were then brought to Santubong where they were exchanged for cotton cloth, bronze ware, salt, tobacco, dragon jars and other stoneware vessels, and fine beads dating back to pre-Malayan times (Harrison and O' Connor 1970:3).

The rich gold veins were located in the highland areas of Bau, Sam (Kalimantan), and Montrada district in the headwaters of the Sarawak River and were extracted primarily through mining. Gold panning was also done along the Sarawak River, concentrating mainly at the river delta of Santubong. These materials were kept as heirlooms by the Malays, the native Dayaks, Ibans, Kelabits, Kenyahs, Kayans, Melanaus, Duruns, and others. This coastal trade community was believed to have operated from the 13th century up to the coming of the first Europeans during the 16th century (Harrison and O' Connor 1970:21– 26).

Beaten gold leafs with cut-breach design were found in West Borneo and are similar to those found in the Philippines, Sarawak, Bali, and South India. In the Philippines, the sample was found in the Balingasay site in Bolinao, Pangasinan (Legaspi 1974; see also Villegas 1993).

The Minangkabau settlement of Tanah Datar in the island of Sumatra was also known in prehistory as an important gold-mining area (Dobbin 1983:3–6). Despite its seemingly natural barrier from the lowland areas, the presence of gold in the Minangkabau settlements opened it to trade with the outside world, developing riverine entrepots along its length. At the mouths of the rivers, port settlements were also established by the long distance and local traders. A unique feature of the

relationship between Minangkabau and east coast plains is the fact that the latter were more important as riverine stops rather than as land settlements (Dobbin 1983:6). These settlements were merely riverbank waypoints established to cater the needs of Minangkabau traders, otherwise known as bulking stations (Dobbin 1983:46). It is interesting to note a parallelism between the gold trade in Benguet and that of the Tanah Datar-- both areas saw cloth as an important commodity to be purchased with gold (Dobbin 1983:60).

An upland and lowland trading network has also been noted in Thu Bon River in Central Vietnam in the old kingdom of Champa. Ky-Phuong (2008) has made headway in doing research on Champa sites along the Thu Bon River. This is the longest river in Vietnam and has been instrumental in the establishment of the Cham port city of Hoi An, a trading entrepot that was dominant in the 16th–17th centuries. The Thu Bon River shaped the economic and political foundations of Central Vietnam (Ky-Phuong 2008). The Cham people not only developed the river as a trading highway but also constructed roads parallel to the Thu Bon River. Here, traders sometimes straddled on elephants. The upland traders were the Katu people who brought down forest products such as wood, cinnamon, black pepper, honey, rhinoceros horn, ivory, rare animals, and precious timber. These items were exchanged for salt, dried seafood, Chinese ceramics, gongs, Indian agate, carnelian, jewelry, iron tools, and other items coming from the lowlands (Ky-Phuong 2008). Gold may have played a minimal role in this riverine exchange network in contrast to others in the region, where the yellow metal was a key player. The propensity for trade in the Thu Bon River was fuelled by forest product acquisition rather than gold. The Katu did not value this metal; moreover, gold is absent or scarce in the Vietnam peninsula (Ky-Phuong 2008).

Oc-eo in Funan, Southern Vietnam (3rd–6th centuries) has been known as an important gold manufacturing and trading centre. As previously mentioned, Oc-eo or any part of Vietnam, for that matter, has little or no gold, so they relied heavily on imports of the raw material. They had the technology for refining gold, which were absent in the Philippines and Sarawak. Gold probably left Philippine shores to be refined here. John Miksic (2008) believes that Funan may have imported gold from the Philippines. This is tenable taking into account that a very close trading relation was also noted between the Philippines and the neighbouring Champa of Central Vietnam (Scott 1984:34, 64- 67).

Another gold manufacturing and trading centre is Java (AD 500–1500), which interestingly, also lacks gold deposits. Gold is prevalent in Javanese material culture. The material has largely been imported from overseas notably Sumatra and Borneo (Miksik 2008). It is highly plausible that raw gold bullions from Benguet may have reached Java since the trading relation with Xava (Java) has been mentioned by Spanish explorers Salcedo and Legaspi when they reached Luzon in the 16th century (Mirandaola 1570; Legazpi 1569; Azurin 1991:41).

Conclusion

It is highly probable that the ancestors of the Ibaloi came from Pangasinan and went up to the nearby Benguet ridges, (see Early 1929; Scheerer 1931; Keesing 1962; Scott 1984; Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985; Cariño 1985; Prill-Brett and Salinas-Ramos 1998; Himes 1998; Castro 1999), which is a specific corroboration of the migration theory of lowland-upland direction. It has been postulated that this minimal theoretical case can be applied in the case of Pangasinan-Ibaloi and Ilocano-Tinguian relationships (refer to Keesing 1962:342). John Early (1929) also called the Ibaloi as the cousin of Pangasinense. The lowlands of old Pangasinan are the zone from which the ancestors of the Ibaloi moved upward to the Benguet heights (refer to Keesing 1962). As to the period when these movements happened, there is no incontrovertible evidence as yet. However, there are many sources (e.g., Keesing 1962; Scott 1984; Cariño 1985; Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985; Prill-Brett-Salinas-Ramos 1998; Himes 1998) that say that the Pangasinan connection was the earliest human migration into the area (generational period cited by oral tradition respondents, which is 1300 to the present), with migration from Eastern Cordillera (Ifugao) placed at a later date.

This paper argues that the gold has been central to highland migrations in Southeast Asia as demonstrated in Santubong, Sarawak and Tanah Datar, Sumatra (Miksik 1990; Dobbins 1983; Harrison and O'Connor 1970). In lieu of this migratory impetus in Southeast Asia, there is very good potential based on the study that the ancestors of the Ibaloi migrated into the Benguet Mountains in the 14th–15th century or earlier because of the extraction of gold (see Himes 1998; De Raedt 1987; Keesing 1962).

Gold extraction is the foundation in earliest remembered times in Ibaloi society. Wet cultivation potential was not a criterion in the

settlement patterns of the Ibaloi during the early period. In fact, some would argue that the Ibaloi did not have to develop wet cultivation because of the high sustainability of gold mining with its ensuing trade and cattle herding up until the 19th century (see Scott 1994; Cariño 1985).

Settlement patterns can be stipulated as having evolved as follows. First, gold miners reaching the southern or southwestern ridges built temporary abodes. They brought with them some lowland plants to supplement the foodstuffs brought from the lowlands—these would be taro, yam, sugar cane, and perhaps, mongo beans. Subsequently, in mining trips, they brought with them livestock (such as dogs, pigs, and chickens), making permanent settlements possible (refer to Keesing 1962:310). It is worth noting that in Spanish and later records, early gold-extracting peoples did not produce their own basic needs-- but that they accessed these through bartering gold in the lowlands, which they extracted moderately according to their basic minimum needs (refer to Quirante 1624; Keesing 1962; Scott 1974; Caballero 1996). Root staples, sugarcane, vegetables, and fruits, were the agricultural base of the Ibaloi of the Benguet area and their Kankanaey neighbours up to the early 19th century (refer to Keesing, 1962:309). The non-cereal agriculturalists were naturally more mobile, and their housings were more casual than those of the cereal agriculturalists.

This researcher would like to propose systematic archaeological explorations focusing on identified traditional gold-mining settlements in Benguet, such as Galan (in present-day Tublay), Arisey and Bugayona, Baranaban (in now Ambuklao area), Antamog (now Antamok) and Conog (now Balatoc-Itogon). Oral traditions accounts of the locations of early Ibaloi settlements seem to have downplayed the role of gold mining --the sinequanone to Ibaloi diaspora. Part 2, "Lost in the Retelling: Washed- out *Balitok* in Ibaloi Generational Memory" will discuss in detail the Ibaloi oral tradition accounts of the earliest Ibaloi villages.

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